

HARMONY FIRE DISTRICT

P.O. Box 360 – 194 Putnam Pike
Harmony, R.I. 02829

The regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board was held at the Harmony Fire Station on **Thursday, March 15, 2012.**

Present: Chief Stuart Pearson; Moderator – Raymond Fogarty, Jr.;
Treasurer – Sandra Owens; Tax Collector - Kimberly Barber;
Board Members – Louise Michaels, Milton Huston & Jim Richards;
Association Representative – Eric Palmieri, President;
Attorney – Fred Mason, Jr.

Absent: Board Member – George Kain – excused (illness)

I. – Meeting Called to Order: 7:05 pm by Moderator Fogarty.

II. - Approval of the minutes from the February 16th meeting.

Moderator Fogarty asked the board if there were any discrepancies to note on the minutes from the February 16th meeting. If there are no corrections, he would like to call for a motion to accept them.

Milt made a motion to accept the minutes. Louise seconded the motion.
The motion carried unanimously.

III. – Approval of Bills:

A check register of bills to be paid was provided to all board members in their folder. Moderator Fogarty asked if there were any comments or questions on these expenses. If not, he would like to call for a motion to accept them.

Jim made a motion to approve the bills. Louise seconded the motion.
The motion carried unanimously.

IV. - Treasurer's Report:

Beginning balance February 1st \$420,759.55 and ending balance February 29th \$401,546.65. There was a negative balance in the Tax Income acct (G/L 40100) <\$2,608.13>, Sandy asked Kim to explain. Kim stated that there was a tax sale property redeemed, therefore the negative balance. Other than that Sandy stated there was nothing out of the ordinary to report in February.

Jim made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report. Milt seconded it.
The motion carried unanimously.

V. - Tax Collector's Report:

Taxes receivable balance as of today's date is \$115,394.76.

Taxes collected in the month of February, as Sandy had just noted, were <\$2,608.13>.

Third party billing in the month of February totaled \$8,135.04.

Kim reported that she was issued a subpoena for a Superior Court hearing on February 28th. The reason was that RI Tax Titles is suing Bridget Williams, a former partner. Bridget is the woman who handles our Tax Sale for us each year. A couple of years ago she partnered with Attorney Glenn Andreoni and formed RI Tax Titles LLC. Recently Bridget left and thus the ensuing law suit. The district was paid an \$11 fee for the subpoena. Kim stated that all Tax Collectors whom had used Bridget for a tax sale were subpoenaed. Her, Jane Steere and Patti Svannson all attended the hearing together. None of them were required to take the stand and were excused by the presiding Judge.

Louise made a motion to accept the Tax Collector's report. Milt seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

VI. - Chief's Report:

A thank you card was received from member Bob Pierce's wife Doreen. She had fallen down some stairs recently and was sent a floral arrangement on behalf of the district. She is home recuperating now.

Additionally, George Kain was released from the hospital yesterday. He has had two stays in the hospital but is now home and doing much better.

The Chief next gave an update on the telephone pole damage from the day of our last meeting. There was some pole & conduit damage. The pole and the light that had been removed prior to the damage have both been replaced.

The EMT refresher course is ongoing. Currently we are doing the basic level portion and the cardiac level portion will start in September. This refresher has to be done every three years to keep all of the EMT licenses active.

A new Probationary class was started March 4th. There are 13 new crew members attending. Some come with a little bit of qualifications and experience, and some come with nothing. So it will take so time to bring them up to speed. Their ages range from 19 to the mid-twenties and they come from all over. This is excellent for the department.

Annual inspections by the RI Department of Health have been completed for both Rescue 2 and the Reserve Rescue.

A new computer has been purchased for the radio room. This computer is used for Fire Programs, our run report software. The screen burnt out for the old laptop that we were using.

Crew members are working on replacing the ceiling tiles in the pool room. It is coming out nicely.

A contractor came in Saturday morning to meet with the Chief and to give an estimate for building the custom display cabinet and painting the meeting room, hallway, Chief's office and

radio room. Ray asked about cable service to the Promethean Board. The Chief said Verizon will have to come in to run service to it.

The Chief stated that the old TV from the meeting room, which is now surplus, would be raffled off by the Association amongst the crew members.

March 9th the Chief attended a “Stroke & Heart” program at the RI Department of Health. We will be starting this program here and we will be a screening place that people can come to during the day or evening to get their blood pressure checked. We will also offer CPR classes for a fee. We will get some advertising through the program and it is something that we can add to our website. This program started in the southern part of the state and never moved further until now.

Vaughn Oil was in and replaced the expansion tank for the boiler and did the annual cleaning. However we have now entered into a service contract for the future.

The Chief asked Attorney Mason for confirmation of what the dollar amount is that we must go out to bid. He stated it was \$10,000.00.

We are also looking for someone artistic to perhaps paint our “Second to None” logo in the meeting room. The Chief said he would talk to crew member Bianca Mullen. Her cousin has helped us with painting projects in the past for our Annual Christmas Tree Lighting.

Louise made a motion to accept the Chief’s report. Jim seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

VII. – Harmony Fire Department & Improvement Association Report:

Eric started his report for apologizing for not making it to our last meeting. He noticed in the minutes that the board had voted to allow the Association to use the building for the Bingo/Corned Beef Dinner. He thanked them for this, but explained they were not able to hold the event due to a hold-up with the permit process through the RI State Police. It may be something that they would consider again in the future.

The big news he had to announce was that a By-Law change was voted on at the last Association meeting that makes their new name the “Harmony Firefighters Association.” This will eliminate the confusion amongst people in town, as well as the banks. Eric has contacted the Secretary of State’s office to find out the proper steps for amending the Articles of Incorporation.

The banquet is coming up on April 7th, crew members have raffle tickets available for sale if anyone is interested.

The Association’s Annual Meeting is coming up in May and elections will take place. At this meeting Eric would like the Association to focus on redefining its purpose. They are an organization with many different areas: charitable, social club, employee association, etc. He would like to apply for 501(c)(3) status. This would allow anyone making donations to write their donations off. They would apply for a 501(c)(3) under the definition of a Charitable Organization. To do this they would have to redefine their mission statement to be more charitable to the community, as opposed to doing functions that benefit the firefighters or doing

things that benefit us. Eric feels that in the last few years the Association has already been moving in this direction, he just wants to complete the transition. Eric stated that they would still carry out some of the same functions, like sending baskets to sick members, but they would just have to declare it and pay tax on them now. He is still gathering more information and would appreciate any advise the district board could give. Ray said that the board would have Fred review the proposal and they could talk about it at another meeting. Milt asked if it would involve a change to the Associations By-Laws. Eric said it would, the section where the purpose is defined. Where it says “to provide relief to members in time of emergency.” A 501(c)(3) cannot benefit any one individual that has affiliation with your organization. The purpose has to state promoting a sense of community and/or maintaining public buildings. He feels the association can do a lot more to help with the maintenance of the station.

Jim made a motion to accept the Association’s report. Milt seconded it.
The motion carried unanimously.

VIII. - Committee Reports:

- a. Policies & Procedures Manual – Milton, Chair
We are at about 75%, but we are not complete. We can make the document electronically available for the boards review and then distribute at the Annual Meeting. It will be a working document.
- b. Broadband Work Team – Milton & Stephen Kut, Co-Chairs
The Chief received a call from Stuart Freiman of the RIEDC. The project that we wanted to work on, he will be able to offer us technical support, but not support towards the purchase of equipment. His higher ups have decided to go in a different direction and perhaps we will be able to fit us in some way. But like the old saying, “sometimes one door closes and other one opens.” The Chief had another gentleman who lives in the district come in and when speaking with him found that he may be interested in helping us in some way. He would like to get together and talk again. Additionally, we have gained the GIS information through our work with Stephen Kut. This will be beneficial to us with future projects.
- c. Property Review Work Team – George & Louise, Co-Chairs
Unfortunately, due to George’s hospital stay, the work team was not able to meet. Hopefully they will have something to present for the next meeting. Ray told Louise that there is no rush on this review.

IX. - Old Business:

- a. Update on RIDOT proposed Roadwork in Harmony.
The Chief stated that he has asked, but not heard anything new. He has asked crew member Randy Brackett who works at the Gloucester RIDOT Garage and he stated that he believes all projects are on hold at this time. Ray stated that the bill to appropriate the funds has passed the house and is waiting to pass the Senate.
- b. Pathway to Net Zero – Heat & Electricity
No update available.

Jim brought up an issue that George had discussed in the past. The subject of vehicle replacement. He would like to see some sort of cost analysis of the past year for all major bills

and labor costs for each piece of equipments maintenance. Say anything over \$250. Sandy and Kim did not think that would be a problem. Sandy stated that this would be a good time to look at this. With preparing the upcoming 2012-13 budget, if we want to put away more money in the equipment replacement fund, say \$40,000 instead of \$30,000 or even more since the cost of apparatus is so high, this would be the time to figure that out. She also stated that we do have a line of credit at the Freedom National Bank, should we have an emergency. Ray said this analysis should include the ages of the apparatus and expected years of use, then figure out the cost of repair vs. replacement. He said we should also be able to justify the use of the equipment. Jim said that we should also start to consider the factor of space usage on the apparatus floor. Maybe get rid of something or find out if there is storage space available at West Gloucester's station 2. We have two 1950's trucks on the floor and there are only about 4 crew members that can even drive them. Jim said he is all in favor of keeping one parade truck, but there is no need to keep two in the building. Everyone agreed.

Ray wanted to discuss the bank behind the building. Now that the brush has been cleared up he is afraid a vehicle may go over it, especially at night. The Chief said he has discussed this issue with the Deputy Chief and his concern is not blocking the area where the snow is removed to. They are trying to come up with something that would not be too high to push the snow over. Louise suggested a wooden guard rail would look nice. Sandy added that it should have reflectors too. Ray agreed that it should look good, maybe with plants planted around it. The Chief said that he should be able to purchase the materials and construct it in-house.

X. - New Business: Addressed throughout report.

XI. - Public Input: No audience.

XII. – Executive Session: None called.

XIII. – Adjournment:

Louise made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Milt seconded it. The motion carried unanimously. The March meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board was adjourned at **7:45 pm**.

The next meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board
is scheduled for **Thursday, 7:00 pm, April 26th, 2012** at the Harmony Fire Department.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kimberly S. Barber".

Kimberly S. Barber
Tax Collector/Secretary